

Message Text

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PAGE 01 YAOUND 02520 191807Z
ACTION SCS-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 CA-01 /018 W
-----045462 191846Z /75

O 191725Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5556
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA IMMEDIATE
INFO AMCONSUL DOUALA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE YAOUNDE 2520

E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: CDES
SUBJECT: REPORT OF DEATH

REF: A. STATE 127592, B. NDJAMENA 1950, C. YAOUNDE 2500,
D. YAOUNDE 2478

1. REFTEL A JUST RECEIVED AND EMBASSY WISHES TO ASSURE THE DEPARTMENT THAT WE HAVE MADE ALL POSSIBLE EFFORTS TO OBTAIN DETAILS THROUGH OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL CHANNELS. WE HAVE ATTEMPTED TO CONTACT OUR USAID PEOPLE IN MAROUA AND THE LUTHERAN MISSION IN GAROUA BY TELEPHONE WITHOUT SUCCESS. WE HAVE SENT A MESSAGE BY TRAVELLER THIS AM TO OUR USAID PEOPLE IN MAROUA TO ASK THEM TO INVESTIGATE THE MATTER AND REPORT TO US. DUE LOCAL SENSITIVITIES, BELIEVE THAT WE DO HAVE TO WORK THROUGH GURC CHANNELS.

2. VICE MINISTER YAND HAS RECEIVED A RESPONSE TO HIS MESSAGE OF YESTERDAY INDICATING THAT THE ERICKSONS WERE KILLED ON THE NIGHT OF THE SIXTEENTH NEAR THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN YAGOUA, KNIVES WERE USED, AND THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES BELIEVE ROBBERY WAS THE MOTIVE. HOWEVER, HE HAS NO FURTHER DETAILS. WE HAVE TALKED TO THE SECRETARY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF PASTORS OF CAMEROON AND HE STATES THAT LOCAL INTERMENT HAS TAKEN PLACE, ALTHOUGH HE REFUSED TO IDENTIFY THE SOURCE OF HIS INFORMATION. WE HAVE ALSO TALKED TO AN OFFICIAL IN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SURETE NATIONAL WHO CONFIRMED THE DEATH OF THE ERICKSONS, BUT REFUSED TO GIVE ADDITIONAL INFO. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN HANDICAPPED IN THAT NO MEMBER OF LUTHERAN MISSION IN CAMEROON (WHO MIGHT HAVE DIRECT KNOWLEDGE OF INCIDENT HAS CONTACTED EMBASSY.

3. BELIEVE THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THE EMBASSY NORMALLY HAS TO WORK THROUGH THE GURC IN ORDER TO OBTAIN

INFORMATION OF THIS NATURE. TO TRAVEL TO YAGOUA REQUIRES THE CHARTER OF AN AIRPLACE AT A COST IN EXCESS OF \$1,000. WE HAVE MADE THE FIRST AVAILABLE CHARTER WHICH WILL LEAVE FOR YAGOUA ON MONDAY MORNING, BUT BECAUSE OF THE DISTANCE INVOLVED WILL HAVE TO OVERNIGHT IN YAGOUA AND RETURN TUESDAY.

4. NORMALLY WE MUST INFORM THE HOST GOVERNMENT OF OFFICIAL TRAVEL SEVEN DAYS IN ADVANCE AND WE ARE CURRENTLY SEEKING AN EXCEPTION TO THIS RULE IN ORDER TO ENABLE TWO EMBASSY CONSULAR OFFICERS TO MAKE AN ON-THE-SPOT INVESTIGATION. IF THE DEPARTMENT DOES NOT FEEL THAT THESE EFFORTS ARE NECESSARY, PLEASE ADVISE BY RETURN NIACT IMMEDIATE IN ORDER THAT WE MAY STOP THE PROCESSES SET IN MOTION.

5. WITH RESPECT TO REFTEL B WE APPRECIATE ALL EFFORTS MADE BY AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA AND PERHAPS NDJAMENA'S EFFORTS WILL DEVELOP ENOUGH INFO TO OBLIGE NECESSITY OF ON SITE INVESTIGATION. IN THIS REGARD WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE AS TO EXTENT EFFORTS WHICH SHOULD BE EXTENDED ON BEHALF ERICKSON FAMILY.

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